

Nayar: Central Kerala

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kinsmen and they avoided her except on ceremonial occasions. She had a relationship of mutual courtesy with all of her husband's older kinswomen and was given meticulous respect by her husband's junior kinsfolk of both sexes. The *ammāyi* (mother's brother's wife) and the *chēdatti amma* (elder brother's wife) play a role in Nayar jokes and folk tales somewhat comparable to that of the stepmother in Europe. As was mentioned in connection with witchcraft, junior members of a taravād habitually resented these women's hold over their husbands and represented them as grasping, unscrupulous, and intent on robbing their husbands' juniors. This fear of the mother's brother's wife was however much more pronounced in North Malabar, where marriage was monogamous or polygynous and residence avunculocal. [84]

Co-wives and the wives of brothers, being in different houses, had no institutionalized relationships and apparently very little contact. The husbands of women of a property group also had only slight relationships. There was no structure of authority between them because they performed no activities together. The younger men accorded some deference to the older, but all might sit together informally and exchange news. 602 604 607 522 538 595 602 592

Virtually nothing is known of the relationships between co-husbands except the testimony of several writers from the fifteenth to eighteenth centuries that they "agreed very well" with each other. They are said to have distributed the woman's time among them in a convenient manner "according as they can fix a term among themselves" (Hamilton, ed. Penzer, 1930, I: 172). 595

Among the Nayars of this area, households of the linked lineages or enangar fulfilled the customary obligations and carried out the ceremonial roles which were required of an individual's affinal or matrilineal kin in the patrilineal castes of Kerala. It was enangar who must take part in life-crisis rites, make gifts at first menstruation and marriage ceremonies, and come to assist at deaths. Enangar were of course often currently affines of the households in which they officiated, for sambandham relationships took place most intensively between lineages of the local caste group. However, the enangar relationship did not derive from particular sambandham ties nor was it brought about by particular tāli rites. It was rather a hereditary relationship of "perpetual affinity" between lineages as groups, which persisted irrespective of the making and breaking of particular sexual ties. When a man who happened to have sambandham with some woman of a household acted there in his role of enangan, he did so as a representative of his lineage, irrespective of his interpersonal mar- 613 592

Cults of the Dead Among the Nāyars

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Third, the ghost cult obviously provides one explanation for the cause of misfortunes, and offers a course of action whereby these may supposedly be allayed. Further, the *taravād's* collective responsibility for its misfortunes in a sense makes the ghosts a common threat to its members, for all may suffer from their anger. The ghost cult thus enhances the sense of unity and common destiny of *taravād* members.

Psychological analysis. The problem of the circumstances under which cults of punitive ancestors arise does not seem to have been solved in culture and personality writing. Freud⁹ derived all forms of fear of, and taboos relating to, the dead, from ambivalence felt to these kinsfolk during life. Mead⁹ in 1930 granted a probable universality of ambivalence to the dead, but pointed out that whereas Western Europeans tend to emphasize affection and grief toward the dead and to suppress hostility, some societies give ceremonial emphasis to the hostility and suppress the expression of affection and grief. Others appear to permit an equal expression of both hostility and grief, and Mead thought that personal conflicts relating to the dead may be almost eliminated when both attitudes find ceremonial expression. She argued that the choice of which attitude should be uppermost in ceremonial expression was "a function of the civilization in which the individual lives," but did not at that time attempt to relate attitudes to the dead to specific types of relationships with the living.

Opler,¹⁰ in an analysis of Chiracahua and Mescalero Apache usages relating to the dead, has shown that these exhibit mixed feelings of grief and hostility, and has derived these from ambivalence to living relatives engendered in the matrilocal extended family. But Opler's analysis, convincing though it is, leaves us again with the problem that probably all social relations, and especially all kinship relations, are to some extent ambivalent. Why then do some societies express ambivalence in mixed attitudes to the dead, others in predominantly hostile attitudes with the benevolent aspects suppressed, and still others in predominantly benevolent attitudes with the hostile aspects suppressed? A more intricate analysis of types of ambivalence is required. Attempts in this direction have been made by a number of recent writers, notably Kardiner, Fortes, Roheim, Hsu, Mead in later writings, and Whiting and Child¹¹ in a cross cultural survey of beliefs about evil spirits and demons. Building on the theories of these writers, I shall try to find meaningful connections between Nāyar attitudes to lineage ghosts and their attitudes to living matrilineal kinsfolk of the preceding generation.

Nāyar lineage ghosts are oriented toward the living. Although Nāyars state that good spirits go to a heaven of sensual pleasures and bad spirits to a hell of physical torture, they do not elaborate this belief or refer to it in connection with the cult of lineage ghosts. They believe that their forebears were sorry to die and are envious of the living. The forebears retain affection for their lands and houses and continue to be interested in tangible good things, particularly in food and drink. These attitudes appear to form part of a general this-worldly attitude among traditional Nāyars. As a caste, their chief interests have been in land and houses, political power, and military exploits. They are not ritual specialists. Most Nāyar men and many women were traditionally literate in Malayālam. Malayālam poems, dramas, and translations based on the great epics, the *purāṇas* and the *Bhāgavad Gītā*, brought the content of much Sanskrit literature to them in a comprehensible form. Nevertheless, comparatively few Nāyars were philosophers or scholars. Among the great majority, ascetic practices were oriented chiefly toward averting misfortunes in this life rather than to accumulating religious merit against the life to come.

K. M. PANIKKAR.—*Some Aspects of Nayar Life.*

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Malayalam has an extensive literature, and it has been developed almost entirely by the Nampadiris and the Nâyars. The following essay is based on an examination of eighteenth-century literature. As far as it treats of present customs and ceremonies it is based on the personal experience and observations of the writer.

II.—THE VILLAGE ORGANIZATION OF THE NÂYARS.

A clear understanding of the life and customs of the Nâyars is impossible without an adequate idea of the strength of their village organization. In this connection it is necessary to make an important distinction at the very start. The village organization in Malabar is utterly unlike the village communities in British India, and therefore should not be confused with them.¹ Malabar has no village community: it has only a village organization. To make the distinction clearer: in British India, in general, there are communities grouped together in a village, generally owning land in common and dealing with other villages as units. But in Malabar individual property, in the ordinary legal sense, is universal, and the village organization comes in only for specific purposes such as the management of the temple affairs and, in olden days, for military training and mobilization.

Another distinction is that the Malabar village organizations include only Nayar families, though in the same village there may be Christians, Ezhuvs, and Jews. For purposes of communal life other castes are outside the village organization. All these castes, except the Parayas, the Pulayas, and all those who were, till the abolition of slavery, in bondage to their masters, live side by side. Another point to remember in this connection is that Malabar villages are not like British Indian villages, built according to a plan. Each house in a Malabar village stands apart in a separate compound and in each compound generally there is a house. It might happen that the compound nearest a Nayar's house is occupied by a Christian. But as far as the village organization is concerned the non-Nâyars do not exist.

Malabar in olden days was divided into ten or twelve states, each of which was ruled by a Rajah. These states were divided into *Nads* (countries); each of these *Nads* consisted of certain *Désams*; and the *Désams* were subdivided into *Amsas*. Later administrative division has abolished the first two to a great extent, though they survive in popular speech and in poetic language. But the *Amsas*, or villages, are wholly intact even now; indeed they form the unit of administration. Before the British conquest and the division of Nayar country into three parts, British Malabar, Cochin, and Travancore, Nayar society was built up on a feudal basis. Each of the *Nads* was under the control of a local magnate called *Nadu Vazhi* (the ruler of the *Nad*). He had criminal and civil jurisdiction and the right to claim

¹ Cf. Matthai, *Village Government in British India*. T. Fisher Unwin, 1913.

595 It is a point very keenly debated as to how far polyandry was prevalent among the Nâyars in olden days. During the last fifty years no trace of such a system has been found. It is to a certain extent true that there is extreme instability of marriage relationship among the commoner folk even now. But for a woman to have more than one husband at a time seems to have been against the moral ideas of the community even two hundred years ago.¹ Nayar ballads and poetry of that age contain many passages where polyandry is spoken of as a barbarous and unknown custom.

[58] But though strict polyandry does not seem to have existed at any time, traces of a system of supplementary spouses, very much like the Pirauru custom among the Australians, exist even now. In the Enangar or allied families, which we have noticed before, any woman of the same generation and in the same relationship as cross-cousin is eligible for marriage, and even if she is married, the young man whose spouse she might have been has certain rights—not distinctly conjugal, but still pertaining to it. He is the one who avenges her against insults. Her children call him "little father," and he has the right of entering any part of her apartments. Among the commoner folk a system of conjugal relationship may still exist. It is practically certain that this is a survival of the system of supplementary spouses such as we have in Australia and other places.

[13] [62] [582] 32 In this connection it may be interesting to notice the general position of women in Nayar society. On *a priori* grounds we are inclined to assume that the position of women in matrilineal communities is higher than in patrilineal societies of the same standard of culture. How strongly this opinion is held will be seen from the fact that even in other parts of South India Malabar is spoken of as the "Land where women rule." It is impossible to make a general statement as to the relative status of women in matrilineal and patrilineal communities. But as far as the Nâyars are concerned, their women enjoy equality with men. They can hold property in their own right and enter the professions they choose. Traditions of scholarship and art are, perhaps, stronger among them than among men. Some of the best Malayalam poets and scholars have been Nayar women, and at the present day the statistics of female education show a higher percentage of English-educated girls among them than among any other Indian community. All the girls' schools in Travancore are manned by them, and some of them hold such high administrative posts as inspectorships of girls' schools.

[87] [875] 55 56 Polygamy was indeed prevalent, and is still legally permitted among the Nâyars. But this, in my opinion, does not show an inferiority of status. Though the opinion of Nayar women would strongly be against the wife of the Akikuyu chieftain who told Mrs. Routledge that she would like her husband to have as many wives as possible,² there is no reason to believe that the possession of more than one wife

¹ See Note 3 at the end. Appendix on "McLennan and the Nair Type of Polyandry."

² Among a Prehistoric People (Akikuyu).

the last fifty years. All the evidence that we have of this custom among the Nâyars in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, are from foreign travellers who, it must be remembered, were not allowed to come within sixty yards of a Nayar house. Their evidence, therefore, is an extremely unsatisfactory ground for dogmatizing on Nayar customs. On the other hand, the extensive Malayalam literature of that period contains no single allusion to polyandry. The works of Kunchan Nambiar, whom it is no exaggeration whatever to compare to Molière, though he describes minutely the social life of the Nâyars of the early eighteenth century with its laxity of morals, deemed only by chivalry of conduct, makes no mention whatever of polyandry. On the other hand, in a famous passage he makes the declaration: "It is against the laws of all castes for a woman to have four or five husbands."

Nalancku barthavaru thikku thanatu
Nalu jatikkum Viddhichatallorkanam.

How far this statement is decisive it is difficult to say. But one thing seems to be clear from it, that the idea in itself was repugnant to the community as a whole, though individuals might have practised it here and there.¹

V.—BIRTH AND FUNERAL CEREMONIES.

Among the Nâyars, as among all the people whose life is regulated by magico-religious customs, child-birth is an event of great and mysterious significance. Especially is this the case with regard to the first child. Therefore the ceremonies of nativity are of an intenser and more magical character during the time of the first pregnancy than during subsequent ones. Indeed, the mysterious nature of childbearing is entirely lost after the first time, and the ceremonies on subsequent occasions are only a few tabus, which are generally, in the phraseology of Van Genepp, "rites dynamistes directs et negatives."

The most important of the pre-natal ceremonies is *Pulicudi*,² or the drinking of the tamarind juice; and the customs relating it are as follows: On the appointed day all the *enangars* (people belonging to the same kingship organization) come to the house early in the morning, and the pregnant woman is taken out by one of them and bathed, after rubbing oil all over her. Then she is dressed for the occasion and, entering the house from the north, sits looking eastward. The astrologer, who being of a lower caste commonly stands in the outer courtyard, calculates the auspicious hour. He sends word when the time is come, and the *Ammâci* (the wife of the mother's brother, and mother-in-law by right of the brother) pours a few drops of tamarind juice in a small silver bowl. The brother or the uncle of the

¹ See Note 3, Appendix.

² Dr. Rivers makes some obviously erroneous deductions based upon this word, for which see note on "The Similarities between Nâyars and the Tulas," Appendix, Note 2.

only training was the training of the memory, and the learned pedagogues never bestowed a thought on cultivating the thinking powers or the originality of his pupils. But this type of school and school-master is fast disappearing under the modern regime of elementary schools. ⁸⁷²
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Next in importance to the school-master is the Kaniyan, an indispensable factor in the affairs and ceremonies of the village.¹ ⁷⁹¹
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Then come the artisan classes whose services are necessary in the construction of houses, and the making of implements of agriculture. They were paid for their work either in kind or in coin. ⁵⁶⁴

The other men of importance in the village economic life were the physician, the village washerman, and the village barber. The village physician was a man of parts; for, not only did he tend the sick and the ailing, but also cast out devils from persons possessed, and with the aid of well prepared charms guarded them from the effects of the evil eye. The village washermen were of the Veluthédan and the Mannán caste. The services of the former were always requisitioned when people wished to become free from pollution, an act the omission of which leads to outcasting. ⁷⁵⁹
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The village barber is another indispensable factor in the village ceremony and is employed for the shaving before all ceremonies. His privileges cannot be encroached upon by his own caste-men from other villages. ³⁰⁵

The village organisation above described is preserved to a certain extent even now and most probably the Kaniyan's profession will survive all other relics of Hindu institutions, as his services are considered to be of essential importance in matters of every day life. ⁶²¹
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The ordinary games pursued by the young men of the village are the foot-ball matches, *Attakalam*, *Kayyāmkali*, and *Kaikottikkali* (a favourite circular dance of the women), *Ushinjāl* and others, while cards and chess are common enough on festive occasions. Cock-fighting is an interesting pastime among the lower classes. ⁵²⁶
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The most important of the village pastimes are the dramatic performances, a description of which is given in the following pages. The drama in Malabar sprang into being in ⁵³⁶
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1. Vide my account of the Kaniyans, Vol. I, Chap. XI, pages 190-93.

536 the early ages, and *Krishnāttam* and *Rimanāttam* are among
 538 the earliest productions in the Malayalam literature. The origin
 of the former is interesting. A pious devotee, Vilvamangalattu
 Swāmiyar, by name, resided in the temple of Guruvāyūr in the
 Chaughat Taluk, which belonged to the Zamorin of Calicut.
 One of the Zamorins, while on a pilgrimage to the temple,
 asked the pious Swamiyar to show him the person of the God
 Krishna. On his wish being gratified, he was so much attract-
 ed by the handsome countenance of the divine 'Child God'
 that the Raja attempted to detain him by catching him by the
 head. But, alas, he vanished, leaving in the hands of the Raja
 a single peacock's feather which had adorned the crown on
 his head. The Raja who was a great scholar determined to
 write a drama which would contain the life of Krishna—from
 his incarnation to his departure to heaven—and *Krishnāttam*
 was the outcome of that resolve. This play, which is seldom
 536 acted outside Calicut, takes eight days for its performance
 beginning as a rule, each night, at 10 p. m. and lasting until
 3 a. m.

The cost of a night's performance is 64 fanams (eighteen
 rupees, four annas, and seven pies). Once it is said that when
 the actors went to Tripunathura, the residence of His Highness
 the Raja of Cochin, who had a night's performance in his
 palace, *Kāmsavadham* (death of Kamsa, an *Asura* king, who
 was the maternal uncle of Krishna) was the play selected for
 the night; and to try the strength of the actor Krishna, a tusk-
 er who was brought to the stage was caught hold of by the
 tusks and killed. The play was never thereafter sent either to
 Cochin or Travancore.

The other play which is equal in importance to the one
 just described is the *Ramanāttam*, and was composed by the
Kottarakkara Tampuran, a distant relative of the then ruling
 sovereign of Travancore. Once this prince asked the Zamorin
 of Calicut to send his actors for a few nights' performance in his
 own palace; but his request was refused on the plea that the
 prince as well as the southerners generally, were not able to
 appreciate so important and erudite a drama. This led to the
 composition of a play by the prince himself.

Plays, as a general rule, are not very popular at present,
 perhaps with the exception of the one kind which is now being

77 From
824 the *tulsi* are also made rosaries, which, in addition to being
[778] an aid to prayers, are also used as ornaments for the neck.
[301] Among the trees used for *pūjas* or sacrifices are the sandal-
[782] wood, the *plasa* (*Butea frondosa*), the *rudriksham* (*Elaeo-*
carpus lanceolatus), the *darbha* (*Poa cynosuroides*), the *karuka*
(*Agrostis linearis*), the *thumba* (*Leucas Indica*), *chembarutti*
(shoeflower, *Hibiscus Rosa sinensis*), *erikku* (*Calotropis gigan-*
tea), *thechi* (*Chrysanthemum*), and the several species of lotus
[278] and jessamine; and of these one and all are extensively used
for medicinal purposes.

77 The belief in demons and the habit of attributing all that
● 538 cannot be easily accounted for to supernatural
Folk tales. powers, have built up an edifice of folk-tales
that would prove of great interest to students of folk-lore, some
of which are given below:—

539 The eclipse is ascribed to the devouring of the sun or
[821] moon by the huge serpent Rāhu, and while it lasts, a kind of
pollution is observed by the people, for during the period of
eclipse, food and drink are supposed to acquire poisonous prop-
erties.

[775] People who hear stories of Rāmāyana, while lying on
their beds, will become blades of grass in their next birth.

[821] Will-o'-the-wisps are accounted for, as lights emitted by a
[825] kind of precious stone (*mānikka kallu*) from the mouths of
[823] serpents, which, owing to their long life, are believed to have
acquired the art of flying. Popular belief is that some serpents
have been blowing for ages upon gold, embedded in the strata
of the earth, and converting it into precious stones of the
nature above mentioned. They keep them in their mouths,
and acquire the power of flying in the air, with the stones
shining brilliantly when they open their mouths.

825 When the crow and the fowl were first created, they were
539 asked which they preferred, personal beauty or long life. The
fowl preferred the former, and the crow the latter. Hence it
is that the crow is said to possess a long lease of life.

The crow is supposed to possess only one eye, though ap-
parently it has two. One eye-ball is said to move first in one
socket, then into the other as necessity requires. The story is
connected with a strange myth.

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[782] day of Makarom (January-February), and on some Tuesdays and Fridays. Kolam-tullal, Velan-pravarti, Ayiramaniyam-tullel, Chavuttu, Tila-homam, and a host of other ceremonies are performed with a view to propitiate spirits, and the assistance of the Kaniyans and Velans is largely sought. Serpents, too, whose images are located on the north-western side of most gardens in Central and North Travancore, receive a large share of adoration. The sun is an object of universal worship. Though the Gayatri cannot be studied, or the Sandhyavandanam of the Brāhmans performed, an offering of water to the sun after a bath, to the accompaniment of some hymn, is made by almost every pious Nāyar. The Panchakshara is learnt from
- 538
[517] an Ilayatu, and repeated daily. A large portion of the time of an old Nāyar is spent in reading the Rāmāyana, Bhagavata and Mahābharata, rendered into Malayālam by Tunchattu Ezhuttachhan, the greatest poet of the Malabar coast. Many places in Travancore are pointed out as the scene of memorable incidents in the Rāmāyana and Mahābharata. There are many temples, tanks, and mountains connected with Rāma's march to the capital of Ravana. Equally important are the singular feats said to have been performed by the five Pāndavas during the time of their wanderings in the jungles before the battle of Kurukshetra. Bhima especially has built temples, raised up huge mountains, and performed many other gigantic tasks in the country. There are some village temples owned exclusively by the Nāyars, where all the karakkars (villagers) assemble on special
- 623 occasions. A very peculiar socio-religious ceremony per-
178 formed here is the kūtṭam. This is a village council,
574 held at the beginning of every month for the adminis-
tration of the communal affairs of the caste, though, at

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of them represent devils or some kind of inferior evil spirits, and dance madly under the influence of the spirits which they represent. Then comes the Arayan as on the previous day with his little procession, and lastly comes the blacksmith with the sword. The procession in the evening is a great affair. Eight elephants, which kept line beautifully, took part in it when I witnessed it. One of them, very handsomely caparisoned, had on its back a priest (Müssad) carrying a sword smothered in garlands of red flowers representing the goddess. The elephant bearing the priest is bedizened on the forehead with two golden discs, one on each side of the forehead, and over the centre of the forehead hangs a long golden ornament. These discs on the elephant's forehead are common in Malabar in affairs of ceremony. The Mäppilla poets are very fond of comparing a beautiful girl's breasts to these cup-like discs. The elephant bears other jewels, and over his back is a large canopy-like red cloth richly wrought. Before the elephant walked a Nāyar carrying in his right hand in front of him a sword of the kind called nāndakam smeared with white (probably sandal) paste. To its edge, at intervals of a few inches, are fastened tiny bells, so that, when it is shaken, there is a general jingle. Just before the procession begins, there is something for the Tiyaṇs to do. Four men of this caste having with them pūkalasams (flower kalasams), and five having jannakalasams, run along the west, north, and east sides of the temple outside the enclosure, shouting and making a noise more like the barking of dogs than anything else. The kalasams contain arrack (liquor), which is given to the temple to be used in the ceremonies. Members of certain families only are allowed to perform in this business, and for what they do each

873 Of the two B.L.'s I mentioned, one is the District Magistrate in the State, another is a Pleader; of the graduates one is in the Government service in British India on a pay of Rs. 35, and the rest are still continuing their further studies.

871 Except the Royal Readers and text-books which pupils buy for
217 their school course there are not very many good English books in the village. A few of us have tried to start a reading-room and library for the English-reading public, but it is only a beginning. But good Malayalam books are common.

No description of village-education would be complete without noting those silent yet effective forces of culture which make a Hindu home what it is, so sweet, so hospitable, and so pious.

545 The village is often visited by a troupe of 'players' who put on the stage Puranic stories in the form of pantomimes and *natakas* or dramas. The celebrated Malabar pantomime is known as *Kathakali*. A big landlord, or ruling chief, forms a troupe of players and sends them abroad, just after the rainy season is over. This troupe comes to a village, and a well-to-do and influential man in the village is expected to make arrangements for a performance. The expenses of the troupe for that day together with a small donation, which seldom exceeds Rs. 10, are to be paid by that person, and the villagers can witness the performance free of charge. The reputation of the man who has started the troupe, generally a big zamindar or a ruling chief, goes a long way in canvassing persons willing to meet the expenses of the play in a village. Sometimes the pantomime takes place in the local temple and the *devaswom* authorities are bound to meet the daily expenses of the players. This troupe travels from place to place and returns at the end of the season to the place from which it started and the members engage themselves in their respective occupations, generally agriculture, or as servants to the landlord who formed the troupe. The same round is repeated in the next season.

539 There are also various ways of teaching broadcast the Puranic lore such as *chakiyar kooth*, *ottam thullal*, etc.

In a *chakiyar kooth*, the *chakiyar* recites certain Sanskrit *slokas* illustrative of stories from the Puranas and interprets them with wit and humour in such an excellent fashion that there will not be one in the audience who does not stretch his sides with laughter. In an *ottam thullal*, the person recites with appropriate gestures verses composed in short Malayalam metre dealing with Puranic stories. These are usually performed on the occasion of festivals in temples.

The above institutions are indigenous to Malabar. Among the Tamil Brahmans, a travelling *Sastrigal* often visits a village and reads Puranic stories in Sanskrit in the local temple and interprets them in Tamil so that the men and women in the village may understand them. At the time of his departure a decent sum is subscribed and paid to him.

In every decent home, a member of the family reads stories from the Puranas to the other inmates in the vernacular. All the people listen with rapt attention and sometimes engage in a lively discussion. Tamil Brahman ladies usually learn by heart Puranic stories in the shape of songs which they recite every

morning and evening and also in the leisure hours of the noon. I have often noted with interest the way in which even apparently illiterate people discuss among themselves the philosophy of life as preached in the Hindu sastras. 538 •

Village administration.—Panchayats were only introduced into the State in 1913. His Highness granted it as one of his boons during the celebration of his sixtieth birthday. "It is also my wish to revive, in commemoration of this occasion, the old village panchayat system which, I trust, will give facilities to the people to settle several matters of each village easily and quickly amongst themselves and give them some training in the art of self-government. It may also afford them better opportunities of representing their wants and grievances to the Darbar." With this Proclamation of His Highness the Raja begins the definition of the constitution and powers of the Village Panchayat Regulation. 623

Constitution.—Five members of whom the chief village officer of a revenue village (called locally "Parvathiakaran") is an ex-officio member. The rest are now nominated. It meets at least once a month.

POWERS.

I. *Administrative.*—(1) Maintenance and repairs of all minor irrigation works (i.e., works which do not require professional skill) below the cost of Rs. 500.

- (2) Maintenance of road avenues.
- (3) Maintenance of water-sheds.
- (4) Prevention of epidemic diseases.
- (5) Clearing and repairing of public wells and tanks.
- (6) Formation of Co-operative Credit Societies.
- (7) Improvement of public lanes and canals.

II. *Judicial.*—Civil disputes up to Rs. 50 with or without the consent of the parties, and up to Rs. 200 with the consent of the parties. 692

The judicial portion of the Regulation is still in abeyance and has not been brought into force in any panchayat in the State.

Even the administrative portion is applied only in three places in the taluk, since the rest have not sufficiently responded to the scheme. Watakancheri is still without a panchayat, though it is the headquarters of the taluk. 623

For executive work every taluk is under the direct administrative supervision of a Tahsildar (Revenue officer) who is also the Chief Treasury Officer. Until recently he was also a Magistrate, but this function is definitely taken away from him. Below him are Revenue Inspectors and village officers. The taluk in question, which has 74 villages, has 4 Revenue officers and more than 30 village officers. Watakancheri with an adjoining village is under a "Parvathiakaran" who collects the revenue and who has a clerk under him. This "Parvathiakaran" is paid Rs. 12 per month and his clerk Rs. 9. The revenue inspector supervises the survey work and collection work, and checks the village accounts. There are also a Munsif's Court and a Magistrate's Court in the village for the settlement of civil and criminal disputes. 631 [692]

Each taluk in the State has, as a rule, one Sanitary Inspector. The village officers should bring to the notice of the Sanitary 744